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# The Jubilee Year.

Silas Alward, D. C. L., M. P. P.

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# THE JUBILEE YEAR.

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## AN ORATION

DELIVERED BY

SILAS ALWARD, D. C. L., M. P. P.,

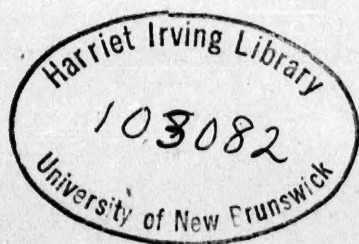
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# THE JUBILEE YEAR.

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*Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen:—*

Among the ancient Hebrews the celebration of the jubilee year was an event fraught with intense interest. It served a two-fold purpose, marking an epoch in the nation's history and bringing comfort to the sorrowing and outcast; to the bondman it meant freedom; to the prisoner liberty; to the debtor, a cancellation of all his obligations and to the unfortunate, a return of his ancestral estates. With us the celebration of a jubilee year is a matter of mere sentiment, attended, however, with this advantage, that it serves, or rather should serve, to excite gratitude for the blessings of the past and inspire hope for the future. With such a feeling will we join in celebrating the approaching jubilee—gratitude for fifty years of unprecedented prosperity, and hope for a future bright with promise.

Of the thirty-six sovereigns who have borne sway in England since the Norman conquest, during a period of eight hundred and twenty-one years, but three have ruled more than fifty. It is a coincidence worthy of mention, that each of these three stood third in his line—Henry the Third, Edward the Third and George the Third. It is also a coincidence, likewise worthy of mention, that during the reigns of these respective sovereigns great constitutional changes were effected—changes of far-reaching import. Down to the reign of Henry the Third, the people had little or no share in the government of the country. They in fact constituted an unknown factor in the body politic. So arbitrarily did this sovereign exercise his kingly prerogatives and so repeatedly did he violate the provisions of the Great Charter, the barons rose in rebellion, determined at all hazards to cast off so galling a yoke. To ensure success they sought the alliance of the great body of the people. Under the leadership of Simon de Montfort, they defeated the king's army at Lewes, taking him prisoner. Simon, surnamed the Righteous, decided to call a Parliament. Heretofore only Ecclesiastics, the different orders of the Nobility and Knights of the Shire had been summoned to the Council of the



nation. The sheriffs were now for the first time directed to return deputies for the boroughs and citizens for the towns. In the Parliament of 1265 the merchant and tradesman took their seats in the general court of the nation, by the side of the mitred Bishop and belted Earl, for at this time all the estates of the realm sat in one chamber. The presence of an order of men, before considered too mean to enjoy a place in the national council, was regarded by prelate and noble as an intrusion and the new-comers were made to feel their position was not an enviable one. This epoch in the Parliamentary history of England marks the commencement of that fierce and bitter struggle between the champions of popular rights on the one hand and kingly prerogatives and caste and privilege on the other. For over six hundred years has it been waged with a vigor as relentless as it has been unpausing. It has taken all these years to curb kingly and priestly authority, break down caste and privilege and change government of the king, for the king and nobility, into government of the people, by the people, for the people. And what a series of splendid victories for justice and right illustrates the history of this unparalleled contest—the confirmation of the Great Charter, the Petition of Right, the Bill of Rights, the Habeas Corpus Act, Catholic Emancipation, the Reform Bill of 1832, the abolition of slavery, the repeal of the Corn Laws, the Reform Bill of 1867, and the Franchise Act of 1884 by which two millions were added to the electorate. Thus has liberty been gradually broadened down from precedent to precedent and thus has the reign of the people been inaugurated. And the end is not yet. The lofty mission of the advocate of popular rights shall not have been accomplished until every wrong is redressed, every right vindicated and liberty and justice shall become the inalienable birthright of every descendant of the Anglo Saxon race.

The rise of the House of Commons, popularly so called, dates from the time of Edward the Third. In the fifteenth year of this sovereign's reign the representatives of the people first sat in St. Stephen's Chapel, apart from the lords, elected their own Speaker, and began to exercise the power of granting supplies. For over five hundred years this august assembly, the greatest and freest the world has yet seen, has exercised its functions, whose annals

are illustrated by the genius of a Pitt, a Burke, a Fox, a Bright and a Gladstone.

In the reign of George the Third, that great constitutional principle was established beyond question—that representation and taxation are co-ordinate rights. The want of its earlier recognition cost England the loss of her thirteen American colonies.

Soon our gracious Queen will rank fourth among the jubilee sovereigns, a

“Queen as true to womanhood, as queenhood,  
Glorying in the glories of her people,  
Sorrowing with the sorrows of the lowest.”

Not only has her reign been distinguished by great constitutional changes, it has been rendered illustrious as well by the most wonderful advance in art, science, literature and material progress in every department of human enterprise. Who can adequately describe these

Fifty years of ever-broadening commerce !  
Fifty years of ever-brightening science !  
Fifty years of ever widening empire ?

Of all the sovereigns who have assumed the globe and the sceptre none surpass her in all the great qualities of queenhood and womanhood, for in her we see

“Nothing of the lawless, of the despot,  
Nothing of the vulgar or vainglorious,  
All is gracious, gentle, great and queenly.”

In the record of the world's history never did nation occupy the proud position of Great Britain and her world-embracing colonies and dependencies. Gibbon, in his *Decline and Fall*, sketches with a master's hand the extent of the Roman Empire, when at the zenith of its greatness, stretching as it did from beyond the Euphrates in the east to the Pillars of Hercules in the west, a distance of three thousand miles ; and from the arid sands of the Libyan desert in the south to the eternal snows of Sarmatia in the north, a distance of two thousand miles, embracing the fairest portions of the then habitable world. Yet the mighty expanse of the Roman Empire constituted in area only one-fourth part of the British Empire of to-day. Its population of 120,000,000 being only one-half that of India, one of its dependencies.

As by contrast we are the better able to form a just estimate of the qualities of an object, the characteristics of an individual and the progress of a nation, so in order adequately to appreciate the status of the British Empire it would be well to draw a parallel between the present and some other period in its history. To this end let us contrast the Victorian and Elizabethan periods. Next hastily review the marvellous progress of the last fifty years, and then proceed to enquire what is the probable destiny of this world empire?

The period of contrast constitutes a great epoch in the nation's history. By some it is called the age of the renaissance. By others, the seminal period of English history. However designated, it was an age marvellous in deeds and in great names. That surely was no ordinary epoch that produced among poets a Spenser and Shakespeare; among philosophers, a Bacon; among statesmen, a Walsingham and Cecil; among soldiers, a Sydney; and among sailors, a Howard and Drake. Historians dwell lovingly on the glories of "Merrie England" under "Good Queen Bess," and poets never weary of extolling those halcyon days, when

\* \* every man ate in safety  
Under his own vine what he planted, and sang  
The merry songs of peace to all his neighbors.

Yet poetic license will not prevent our noting the dark shades of so bright a picture. Three hundred years ago clouds and darkness rested on the fatherland. The nation was weighted with the boding apprehension of an impending calamity. In all the ports of Spain the note of preparation was heard. Great fleets were rendezvousing at the Bay of Biscay. Large armies were concentrating at the same objective point. What did all this betoken? A settled purpose as fixed as the stars, to crush out, and forever, British civilization; to make of England a mere appendage of Spain. No second blow was intended. In 1588, the Great Armada, vauntingly styled "invincible," bore down upon the devoted country. You know—all the world knows—its fate. Vanquished, all but annihilated, it was driven back to the shores of Spain, whose star of empire hastened to its setting, while that of England rose in the ascendant to shine with increasing splendor as the years pass, and destined, we trust, never to pale. What a



striking contrast does the England of three hundred years ago present to the Great Britain of 1887. Then Scotland was a separate kingdom. Then Ireland, although a subject, was virtually an alien, nationality. Then the population of England was less than five millions—not more than the Dominion of Canada to-day. The population of the empire is now three hundred millions, having increased sixty-fold. Then England was without colonies. Now her dependencies and colonies, constituting Greater Britain, embrace an area seventy-fold greater than the area of the United Kingdom. Then she was virtually without commerce. But as Spain and Holland had wrested from the free states of Italy the commercial primacy of the Mediterranean and the trade of the east, so England in turn wrested from Spain and Holland the commercial supremacy of the world. In 1582 the vessels of all sizes owned by England amounted to only 1232, of which only 217 were above eighty tons. Their united tonnage was 50,000, not one-fifth that of New Brunswick, only one-twenty-eighth that of the Dominion of Canada. Her seamen numbered only 14,295, less than those who go down from Canadian shores and smite the sounding furrows of our own waters. Now her great war-ships patrol the watery highways of the world unchallenged, and her merchant navy of 30,000 ships, manned by 270,000 sailors, are found on all seas. Her flag floats over forty-nine per cent. of the carrying power of the world. Nearly one-half of the world's commerce is moved in British bottoms. During the reign of Elizabeth two events occurred, considered at the time trivial, yet fraught with the greatest results for the nation and the world. An expedition set sail from England across the western main and attempted colonization in the northerly portion of this continent. Another, under Sir Walter Raleigh, sailing further south, proceeded to colonize what is now known as the State of Virginia. These were the first serious attempts at colonization on the part of England. All the far-reaching results of British civilization on this continent are traceable to these expeditions. At the close of the year 1599, some London merchants formed themselves into a company, under the title of The Governor and Company of Merchants of London Trading to the East Indies. The stock of the corporation amounted to seventy two thousand pounds, divided

into one hundred and twenty-five shares. In 1600 the Queen granted them a patent. Four small vessels were fitted out and in a humble way the company entered into competition with Portugal, Holland and France for the trade of the East. The venture proved successful beyond expectation. Territorial possession soon followed, which finally paved the way for the acquisition of a dependency for the nation, of nearly one and a half million square miles, with twelve great provinces and one hundred and fifty feudatory states and principalities, rich in the accumulated wealth of centuries and possessing the grandest possibilities and containing a population of two hundred and forty millions.

The great constitutional changes wrought during the last three centuries deserve more than a passing notice. Freedom, as now understood, was then undreamed of. Then might was largely right. Then offence's gilded hand was often seen to shove by justice. The last of the Tudors exercised her royal prerogatives with all the rigor of a Plantagenet. Then there flourished those two infamous Courts, the Star Chamber and High Commission; one claiming jurisdiction for all sorts of contempts and offences beyond the reach of the Common Law and for which no sufficient punishment had been provided; the other, jurisdiction in matters of conscience and exercising its usurped functions contrary to all ideas of justice and equity, both wielding unlimited authority of fining, imprisoning and inflicting corporal punishment. These despotic and illegal tribunals were not abolished until the following century. Then arrests were made on mere suspicion and jails filled without the warrants of commitment specifying any charge, and the victims of the despotic power detained in custody for years without being able to obtain any remedy from the law. Now, happily, the liberty of the subject is a sacred thing, guarded with watchful jealousy. Then taxes were frequently levied, not by constitutional means, in fact rather extorted in the shape of benevolences and forced loans, and by the imposition of purveyance, pre-emption and embargoes on merchandise. Then the Crown could supersede legislative power by means of proclamations. Then the nobility could not marry without the permission of the sovereign, and no man could travel abroad without the like permission. *Tempora mutantur et nos mutamur.*

Who would care to forego the freedom of the nineteenth century for these so styled halcyon days? Distance lends enchantment to the days of long ago. A nearer view, however, dispels the illusion.

The progress of the United Kingdom, during the present reign, evokes unqualified admiration. It is not measured solely by the growth of population, the expansion of trade and the accumulation of vast wealth. It is seen as well in the broadened liberty, which enlightened civilization brings and the thousand and one conveniences which add so much to the comfort of life and make it worth the living. The growth of population has been less in the United Kingdom than in the larger colonies. Between 1837 and 1887 it increased in the former by only forty-one per cent., while in British North America, by two hundred and twenty-five per cent., and in the Australasian colonies, by two thousand three hundred and forty-five per cent. Wealth for the like period has made a gain of one hundred and twenty-four per cent., or at a rate three times greater than population. The repeal of the Corn Laws in 1846 and of the Navigation Laws in 1849 gave a wonderful impetus to trade and opened up a new era of prosperity to the country. The trade of the Empire expanded from two hundred and nine millions in 1837, to one thousand and seventy-nine millions in 1886, or over five hundred per cent. Steam power has proved a great factor in promoting the prosperity of the nation. The year Her Majesty ascended the throne the first two steamers, the "Great Western" and "Sirius," crossed the Atlantic. In shipping, including steamers, the effective carrying power has increased from three and a quarter million tons in 1837, to twenty-two million tons in 1887. The ascension of Her Majesty to the throne is coincident with legislative progress, which constitutes a marked feature of her reign, among which may be classed: the granting of State aid for educational purposes, the opening of the Civil Service to all classes, the abolition of the purchase of army commissions, the Educational Act of 1870 and the broadening of the franchise so as to embrace all classes of the State.

The growth of Australasia is unprecedented in the annals of colonial history. During the reign of our sovereign this island continent has leaped into almost national existence. One hundred years ago, this month, six transports, having on board 757 con-

victs, sailed from England for Botany Bay. They were eight months in making the voyage and eventually founded a penal settlement not far from the present capital of New South Wales. In 1803 Van Diemen's Island, (now Tasmania) became an auxiliary penal station. For years these places were popularly supposed to be beyond the pale of civilization ; as altogether unfitted for colonization and useful only as places of transportation for the vicious and outcast. In 1810, Governor Macquarie described New South Wales, which then had under control all the settled portions of Australia, as barely emerging from a state of semi-barbarism ; without trade, credit or revenue ; its people depressed by poverty and utterly discouraged ; with agriculture languishing and industrial enterprise at a stand still ; the morals of the people in the lowest state of debasement, and religious worship almost wholly neglected. In 1837 there was but a single Crown Colony in all the islands under the Southern Cross, and the population of the settlements amounted to only 134,000. Now there are two Crown Colonies and six large self-governing states, whose united populations is not far from three and a half millions. Within the last fifteen years its population has doubled. Its trade has risen from £2,800,000 in 1837, to £115,500,000 in 1885. Last year the sum total of the imports and exports of Sydney equalled those of London in 1837. Fifty years ago the roads of the interior were almost impassable and there were scarcely any means of inter-communication save by water. There are now over 7,000 miles of railway in operation and more than 50,000 miles of telegraph, with the work of construction going rapidly on. In 1837 Melbourne consisted of "a wooden church, two wooden inns, three wooden shops and twenty wooden huts." It is now a flourishing city, with a population of 365,000, having private and public buildings quite the equal of any to be found in European cities of the same size and possessing wealth, enterprise and educational facilities which render it a most desirable place of residence. With vast mineral resources, splendid agricultural capabilities and great manufacturing and commercial facilities the future of these colonies is assured and in the not distant future they will, doubtless, rank among the great states of the world.

Still shall freedom keep her hold  
 Within the sea's inviolate fosse,  
 And boast her sons of English mould,  
 In islands of the Southern Cross !

The progress of Canada, during Her Majesty's reign, has surpassed that of any part of the Empire, except Australia. From a number of disjointed, sparsely settled colonies, with but slight bonds of cohesion, British North America has developed into a nationality, whose resources, population and merchant marine entitle it to take high rank among the leading countries of the world. In 1837 the population did not exceed one million four hundred thousand ; now it is not far from five millions. Then there was in all British North America but a single line of railway, only a few miles in length ; now there are in operation over eleven thousand miles, including that great international highway, spanning with bands of iron two oceans, over which may yet pass the travel and commerce of continents. When Her Majesty ascended the throne a deep-seated feeling of hostility existed against constituted authority throughout all the Provinces. The first year of her reign was signalized by rebellion in both Upper and Lower Canada. If ever an appeal to arms were justifiable in seeking a redress of grievances and the end reached were pleadable in extenuation of what might technically be called a constitutional wrong, then was the armed uprising of 1837 both justifiable and right. It secured for these Provinces responsible government and all the benefits that followed in its train. It broke down privilege in the hands of the few and placed power in the hands of the many. The causes that led up to this rebellion are not far to seek. Although representative institutions had been granted the colonies, there was not, as in England, executive responsibility. The officers of government were nominated by the Crown on the recommendation of the governor, irrespective of the wishes of the people. The distribution of patronage was in the hands of an irresponsible executive. All offices of trust and profit were held by the favored few within the charmed circle, called the "Family Compact." The assembly might vote or withhold supplies, yet they could not exercise any influence in nominating a single servant of the Crown. The people denounced, and justly denounced, a govern-



ment that was ruled by despatches from the Colonial Office, and whose actions were governed by back-stair influences and court favoritism. A little knot of officials at the respective capitals held all the important offices, discharged in a supercilious manner their duties and lorded it with high hand over their subordinates. Adverse criticism of their acts or a discussion of existing grievances was resented as an unwarrantable interference with constituted authority and subjected the author to all the pains and penalties of the law of libel as then practised and understood. After the suppression of the rebellion the British Government acted with commendable despatch in striving to restore the wavering allegiance of the colonies. In 1838 that able champion of popular rights and advocate of parliamentary reform, Earl Durham, was sent to Canada as Governor General, clothed with special powers as High Commissioner to enquire into and report upon the alleged grievances and suggest a remedy for the settlement of existing difficulties. As the sequel proved no better selection could possibly have been made. Of all the great names that adorn Canadian history none stands higher in public estimation than that of Earl Durham. His able and exhaustive report, addressed to the Queen, is a monument of impartial research and elaborate criticism and constitutes the Magna Charta of Canadian rights. He pointed out with great clearness all the abuses and evils that had been allowed to creep into the colonial system, and then proceeded to discuss at great length the needed reforms. He insisted with repeated iteration upon the necessity of the immediate adoption of executive responsibility in the different Colonial Governments, or what with us is popularly called "responsible government." The coupling of representative government with an irresponsible executive, he contended, not only led to constant collision between the different branches of the legislature, but was the fruitful source of the many ills that had produced such an unhappy state of affairs. He advocated with an almost equal insistence the introduction of municipal institutions, or local self-government. This would relieve the assembly of mere local and parish business and train the people for the discharge of public duties. In the third place he favored the immediate abolition of the clergy reserves. By the Act of 1791 one-seventh of the lands

granted by the Crown was reserved for the benefit of the clergy of the Episcopal Church. This had long constituted a standing grievance. It was regarded as an insult and an injustice to other religious denominations; and, besides, the lands thus set apart remained uncultivated and as a consequence retarded settlement. He urged, in the fourth place, the necessity of the construction of a railway from the Atlantic seaboard to the valley of the Saint Lawrence, to be supplemented by the union of the colonies. Lord Durham's report was made the subject of the most bitter attack by some of the leading English statesmen. His scheme, they said, was utopian, revolutionary and impracticable. Such unmerited abuse told upon a constitution already enfeebled by overwork, and hastened the death of this eminent statesman. The best vindication of the manner in which he discharged the important and delicate trust committed to his charge is found in the fact that under the sovereign, whose sign-manual adorns his commission, every one of the reforms he advocated has been successfully carried out and as a result we have, in the various Provinces of British North America, the models of the finest form of government in the world. Of all the achievements of these fifty years of progress that which excites in our breasts the highest degree of pride is the perfecting of a system of common school education, generally admitted to be second to none in the world.

Let us, in the next place, as proposed, proceed to consider the probable destiny of the Empire. Of late years the subject of Imperial Federation has received a large share of attention. It has been discussed in the leading newspapers of the United Kingdom and Colonies, and in weighty articles of the principal magazines. At the Imperial Conference opened on the 4th of April last, at the Foreign Office, under the presidency of Sir Henry Holland, Secretary of State for the Colonies, the subject underwent lengthened discussion; yet the speakers indulged for the most part in glittering generalities and seemed exceedingly chary of propounding any definite scheme. The Marquis of Salisbury, in the course of an able speech, referred to such aspirations as somewhat sentimental and yet not separated by so deep a chasm from actual practical undertaking as some might think; although hazy, they were the nebulous matter that in the course of ages, of much less

than ages, might cool down and condense into some tangible form and possible shape. While several distinguished leaders of public opinion strongly favor some kind of federation, others, equally as vehement, denounce it as altogether visionary and beyond the range of practical politics. It would be impossible, say the latter, to weld into a homogeneous whole countries separated from each other by vast stretches of ocean, so diverse in climate, resources and the habits and customs of its peoples. Pointing to the Achaian League, the federation of the Swiss Cantons, the confederation of the United Provinces of the Netherlands and that grandest of federations, the United States of America, they say, these were confederacies between contiguous states, which readily coalesced from their homogeneity. The opponents of every and any scheme of federation, in discussing the matter, overlook two important factors that have already revolutionized the world, steam and electricity; agencies that have annihilated time and space, brought distant countries near and caused them to assimilate in many respects. An English paper, the other day, contained the somewhat striking announcement, that the "Ormuz," a steamer of the Orient line, had made the voyage from Adelaide, the capital of South Australia, to London, by the way of the Suez Canal, in twenty-seven days, a distance of over eleven thousand miles. Should an event of importance happen to-day in London, in a few hours afterwards, it would be discussed on the streets of Hong Kong, Melbourne, Vancouver and on the Islands of the Sea. It is said, so few were the facilities of travel and so limited the means of communication, the news of Cromwell's usurpation was weeks, nay months, in travelling to certain parts of the Kingdom. Under the altered circumstances of the present, wrought largely by these agencies, the most distant parts of the Empire are not more remote from each other than were some of the States, when the union to the south of us was formed.

The existing status between the United Kingdom and her dependencies and colonies cannot, from the very nature of the case, be continued for many years. We are gradually, yet surely, nearing the parting of the ways. Should Australia, possessing great agricultural and commercial capabilities and a territory nearly equal to the whole of Europe, progress for the next fifty

years, in the same ratio she has during the last fifty, she will doubtless have attained by her population, wealth and importance, a position, the equal, in many respects, of the mother country. Can her present state of tutelage then be expected to continue? So with Canada. Their relative positions will so have altered, that their political relations towards each other must necessarily undergo change. Can it be for a moment supposed, we will continue to wear the badge of colonialism for all time to come? that we will for many years consent to import our Governor General? carry our cases of appeal three or four thousand miles across the sea to be decided by judges no better qualified than our own to determine our rights? or submit to the possibility of our interests being sacrificed by the parent state in making treaties with foreign countries in matters directly affecting us? Such a proposition needs only mention to insure its refutation. But when we shall have outgrown our present state of colonialism, what next? This is a question that must needs give us pause. But one of two courses seems open to the Empire; either disintegration or integration in an Imperial Federation. In the case of Canada, should disintegration eventually take place, we will be left either to build up an independent nationality or driven to seek political alliance with the sixty millions of people to the south of us. Which shall it be? This is one of the living issues that will tax the best energies of our statesmen in the not remote future.

The question of commercial union between Canada and the United States is now being very generally discussed by the leading Canadian journals. Whether any practical results will grow out of it is exceedingly doubtful. Unquestionably the Maritime Provinces would be greatly benefitted by the free exchange between the two countries of their natural products—of the forest, farm, mine and the sea. But would the United States be willing to adopt restricted reciprocity or a qualified commercial union—one that would exclude the free interchange of manufactured goods? Certainly not. And would the great Province of Ontario consent to throw down all commercial barriers between the respective countries and freely admit manufactured articles or, in other words, adopt unrestricted reciprocity? She certainly would not!

And then, too, under such a union, how could sufficient revenue be raised to meet the burdensome obligations that press upon us? Would not its adoption be a declaration of commercial war against Great Britain? But is commercial union so desirable, that in order to obtain it, we would forego our loyalty and attachment to British institutions and seek political alliance with our neighbors? We think not. We incline to believe there is a settled determination, on the part of our people, to build up on the lines of these latitudes a nationality modelled after the free and wise institutions of our Fatherland. For years the people of these provinces struggled to secure the great boon of Responsible Government. Will we, their descendants, consent to form a political alliance with a country, where there is no executive responsibility as understood and practiced in England and Canada? We admire the Americans for their wonderful enterprise and energy; we willingly accord them fitting meed of praise for their many excellent traits and characteristics and find much to extol in their enlightened form of government; yet, for all this, we are so wedded to British institutions, nothing but the most violent wrench could force us from our allegiance.

Then, it would seem, independence or membership in some sort of Imperial Federation is the destiny of Canada. Is there, then, any practicable scheme of federation or is it the day-dream of the visionary, unworthy serious consideration?

Three different forms of Federation have been outlined, each having its special advocates. First, a political or parliamentary union; second, a Zollverein or customs union; and third, a Kriegsverein or an alliance offensive and defensive, for mutual protection.

Two kinds of parliamentary union have been formulated; one, the admission into the House of Commons of representatives from the different colonies and dependencies upon the basis of population; the other, the relegation of purely local matters to subsidiary parliaments and the formation of a grand, paramount parliament, charged with legislative powers in matters of imperial concern. Against the former it has been urged in objection, that it would be improper for colonial representatives to take part in and vote upon matters relating to the internal economy or government



of the United Kingdom ; also, that with an increased representation and the introduction of additional subjects for legislative consideration, parliament, if constantly in session, could scarcely dispose of all business brought before it. In favor of the latter, it has been contended, it would effectually settle the Irish question ; for under its provisions local self-government would be granted to England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland as well. Sir Samuel Wilson's scheme of two chambers—an upper and lower house—of one hundred members each, has been considerably canvassed. The representatives of the lower house to be elected by the lower house of each colony or dependency and the upper house by the members of the upper house of the different colonies and divisions of the Empire. As there are about fifty millions of the English race in the British dominions, he would make the electoral unit half a million ; and in the more important colonies, each fraction of half a million to have a member. In such a union India and the Crown Colonies would be excluded. Opposed to such a scheme stands the high authority of so distinguished a name as the Right Hon. W. E. Forster. This eminent statesman thought it would be regarded with suspicion in the colonies as they would fear being dwarfed individually, and if combined, of being weak in comparison with England ; while, on the other hand, England would not consent to a paper constitution and a form of government involving state rights and the necessity of establishing some tribunal to determine the infringement of these rights. The Marquis of Salisbury, in the speech referred to observed : “ I am not here now to recommend you to indulge in any ambitious schemes of constitution-making.” England, doubtless, would hesitate long before consenting to give up the immemorial usages and customs of her unwritten Constitution for a paper one. So revolutionary seem such schemes and so beset with difficulty their accomplishment, their serious consideration, at this stage of development, is generally considered premature. In this connection may be mentioned the proposal of Lord Grey, to make the agents of the colonies Privy Councillors and constitute them a Board of Advisors to assist the Cabinet and Colonial Secretary in the management of Colonial affairs.

A Zollverein, modelled after the form of the North German

Customs Parliament of 1867, or Customs Union, has also found its advocates. This also, at the present, seems impracticable. It would necessitate the adoption of a system of perfect free trade between the United Kingdom and her dependencies or the imposition of uniform duties upon like articles imported into each country. In 1846 England adopted the principles of free trade. On the other hand, latterly, several of her colonies and dependencies, especially Canada, New Zealand, Victoria and South Australia, have adopted the protective system. All the tariffs of the self-governing colonies differ not only from the Mother Country, but from each other, no two being formed on similar lines. The strongest proof of their wide divergence, in this respect, is found in the fact, that while in Great Britain only twenty-seven per cent. of the whole revenue is raised by customs duties, in the colonies, the proportion ranges from sixty to ninety per cent. of the gross taxation. Victoria and New South Wales, contiguous states, have formed altogether different fiscal policies—the one based on the lines of high protection, the other on free trade or revenue tariff. Can all these discordant policies be made to harmonize, as harmonize they must, before such a system of union can be inaugurated? The thoughts of men may be so widened with the process of the suns, that in due time they may be brought to such a plane of thought and action, but, as yet, the day seems far distant. Lord Salisbury, in speaking of Customs Union, remarked: "But the results which we came to with respect to our fiscal policy forty years ago set this idea entirely aside, and it cannot now be resumed until on one side or the other very different opinions with respect to fiscal policy prevail from those which prevail at the present moment."

If neither a Political nor Customs Union seems practicable, what may be said of the *Kriegsverein* or combination for purposes of defence? Certainly this form of union seems not only desirable, but feasible as well. Seventeen millions are annually expended by Great Britain for the support and maintenance of the army and ten millions for the navy; twenty-seven millions in all for defence. If this were supplemented by an amount, on the part of the Dependencies and Colonies, proportionate to their wealth and population, the Empire could be put in such a state of defence as

would render it safe from foreign aggression. A suitable state of defence is one of the pressing needs of the hour, since the vast expansion of the Empire, while it has greatly added to its prosperity and *prestige*, has increased its vulnerability. In case of war between the United Kingdom and a foreign state we would be open to attack, and yet, how much safer would we feel, if, being common sharers in the burden of defence, we could, as a matter of right, claim the protection of the flag. By contribution equally borne by all the subjects of the Empire an amount could easily be realized to fortify the coaling stations, strengthen the strongholds and equip swift cruisers to protect its commerce on all the commercial highways of the world. Such a union would raise the status of every colonist and inspire a sentiment of common citizenship akin to that of the *Romanus Civis*. There would then be but one army, one navy and one flag—*our army, our navy and our flag*. We would then be sharers in all the glories of the Realm. One sentiment would pervade all, of a common inheritance in the renown of the most prosperous and powerful nationality the world has yet seen. Under such a union all distinction would be done away with between Colonist and Englishman, service in both army and navy being open to each on like terms. Nothing except a political union would so much tend to bind together all parts of the Empire as such a federation. United it would be invincible. No power on earth could molest us. It would be "the guardian angel of freedom and the bulwark of liberty all over the world."

Britain's myriad voices call,  
Sons, be welded, each and all,  
Into one Imperial whole—  
One with Britain heart and soul!

Such a combination for mutual defence might, under the altered circumstances which the years bring, pave the way for a closer union, just as the German *Kriegsverein* led to the Customs Union of 1867, which in its turn led to the federation of the German States under the Empire.

What Providence may have in store for the grand old nation we know not. There are those who believe, that the law of birth, growth, maturity, decline and death, which governs the animal

and vegetable kingdoms, alike determines the destiny of nations.

They tell us, the fate, which overtook Assyria, Greece and Rome, will eventually mark the career of England. That as the course of Empire down the centuries may be traced by the broken arch and shattered column, so, in the lapse of time, within her island home will yet be seen the relics of a greatness and civilization forever departed. We indulge no such gloomy apprehension. Moved by the lever that is yet "to uplift the earth and roll it in another course," her career, we trust, lies along different lines. Those nations builded as the foolish man in scripture—upon the sand. Our fathers builded, let us hope, more wisely. They digged deep and laid broad the foundations upon the eternal principles of truth and justice, and though the rains may descend, and the floods come, and the winds blow and beat upon it, they will spend their fury upon the firm base of the glorious superstructure. We believe it will never be said of her as of Rome—"there she stands:—

The Niobe of nations,  
Childless and crownless, in her voiceless woe,  
An empty urn within her wither'd hands,  
Whose holy dust was scatter'd long ago."

The future may seem dark and foreboding, yet let us have faith to believe, that good is the final goal of seeming ill.

Are there thunders moaning in the distance?  
Are there spectres moving in the darkness?  
Trust the Lord of Light to guide her people,  
Till the thunders pass, the spectres vanish,  
And the Light is Victor, and the darkness  
Dawns into the Jubilees of the Ages.

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Alward, Silas.

The jubilee year.

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